Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended)   A method to <u>automatically</u> identify sub-regions of a multi-channel image as containing red-eye, <u>said image stored on a computer-readable medium and operatively connected to a processor,</u> said method comprising:

   (a)   <u>said processor</u> converting said multi-channel image to a modified multi-channel image wherein at least one of said channels is an enhanced luminance channel that has more than 60% of the luminance information of said multi-channel image and at least one of said channels is a saturation channel, and applying a threshold to said enhanced luminance channel, said threshold constructed to produce a flash mask ~~characterized by the inclusion of those regions of said multi-channel image potentially affected by a flash, and the exclusion of those regions of said image not potentially affected by a flash, irrespective of whether an included or excluded region is within the boundaries of a person's face~~;

   (b)   <u>said processor</u> identifying a sub-region of said flash mask as containing a red-eye region based upon, at least in part, processing said saturation channel by applying a saturation mask to one or more pixels of said image, said saturation mask comparing the standard deviation of the saturation value of a respective pixel to a threshold <u>of 0.15</u>; and

   (c)   <u>said processor</u> removing the identified said red eye from said multi-channel image.

2. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said standard deviation of said saturation value of a respective pixel is measured relative to the mean saturation of pixels in a neighborhood local to said respective pixel.

3. (Previously presented)   The method of claim 1 wherein said modified multi-channel image has hue, saturation, and intensity channels.

4. (Previously presented) The method of claim 3 wherein said saturation channel represents the relative bandwidth of the visible output from a light source.

5. (Original) The method of claim 4 wherein said hue is substantially the wavelength within the visible-light spectrum at which the energy output from a source is the greatest.

7-11. (Canceled)

12. (Currently amended) A method to automatically identify sub-regions of a multi-channel image containing red-eye, said multi-channel image having at least a first channel and a second channel, said image stored on a computer-readable medium and operatively connected to a processor, said method comprising:

    (a)   said processor identifying a sub-region of said image as containing a red-eye region based upon, at least in part, applying a first mask to said first channel, said first mask comparing a first statistical measure of at least one pixel of said image to a first threshold to produce a flash mask characterized by the inclusion of those regions of said multi-channel image potentially affected by a flash, and the exclusion of those regions of said image not potentially affected by a flash, irrespective of whether an included or excluded region is within the boundaries of a person's face;

    (b)   said processor applying a second mask to said second channel of said multi-channel image, said second mask comparing a second statistical measure of at least one pixel of said image to a second threshold, said second statistical measure being a different statistical property than said first statistical measure; and

    (c)   said processor removing the identified said red eye from said multi-channel image, where said first statistical measure is the value of said pixel in said first channel and said second statistical measure is the standard deviation of said pixel in said second channel, having a value of 0.15.

13. (Canceled)

14. (Previously presented) The method of claim 12 wherein said first threshold is different than said second threshold.

15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~13~~ 12 wherein said standard deviation is measured relative to a mean measured over a neighborhood of pixels local to said pixel.

16. (Canceled)

17. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~13~~ 12 where said second channel represents saturation.

18. (Previously presented) The method of claim 12 further comprising using a convex hull technique to identify contiguous regions.

19. (Previously presented) The method of claim 18 wherein contiguous regions having a size less than a threshold are removed as potential red-eye regions, said threshold computed dynamically based on the size of the input image.

20. (Currently amended) A method to <u>automatically</u> identify sub-regions of a multi-channel image containing red-eye, <u>said image stored on a computer-readable medium and operatively connected to a processor,</u> said method comprising:

    (a)   providing said multi-channel image <u>to said processor, said multi-channel image</u> comprising luminance, hue, and saturation channels, respectively;

    (b)   <u>said processor</u> identifying a sub-region of said image as containing a red-eye region based upon, at least in part;

        (i)   filtering out selective pixels of said image based upon a first mask applied to said luminance channel, said mask comparing the luminance value of respective pixels in said image to a first threshold;

(ii)   thereafter applying a convex hull technique to group remaining pixels of said image into a plurality of contiguous regions;

(iii)   thereafter applying a second mask to said hue channel, said second mask comparing the hue value of respective pixels in said plurality of contiguous regions to a second threshold;

(iv)   subdividing said plurality of contiguous regions into a plurality of contiguous sub-regions based upon said second mask and a connected component technique; and

(v)   filtering out the pixels in selective sub-regions based upon a comparison of the aspect ratio of respective said sub-regions to a third threshold;

(c)   said processor applying a third mask to said saturation channel said third mask comparing the standard deviation of the saturation value of respective pixels in said plurality of contiguous sub-regions to a fourth threshold; and

(d)   said processor removing the identified said red eye from said multi-channel image.

21. (Canceled)

22. (Previously presented) The method of claim 20 wherein said fourth threshold is 0.15.

23-26. (Canceled)